

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
March 27 & 29, 2017
395 Whittier Street
Juneau, AK

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. All members except Second Vice-Chair Harmon were present. The board, staff, and public recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Rebecca Himschoot gave an invocation. Regarding possible conflicts of interest, Ms. Himschoot reported that she teaches at a school on a list, to be adopted by the board, of schools that are eligible for state construction or maintenance grants. Additionally, Dr. Keith Hamilton reported that he presides over a college that could be affected by a proposed resolution. Chair Fields declared they did not have a conflict of interest. The board approved the day's agenda.

Public Comment

Dorothy Orr, Executive Director of the Alaska Society of Health and Physical Educators, said she will be on an Alaska's Education Challenge committee regarding student learning. She said the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) emphasizes a well-rounded education.

Tim Parker, NEA-Alaska President, thanked the department for working closely with teachers. What works in good schools are resources and programs, the arts, counselors, well-certified teachers, dual credit opportunities, and science labs. A good school builds curiosity and love of learning. He said years of budget cuts are taking their toll. Mr. Parker said equity is the most challenging part of ESSA. He encouraged the board to visit good schools and note what they see.

Ed Gray of Sitka said parents need a process to opt-out their children from state tests on a statewide form.

Dr. Lisa Parady, speaking for the Alaska Staff Development Network, thanked the department for the upcoming ESSA spring leadership conference and thanked Commissioner Johnson for reaching out to invite participants in Alaska's Education Challenge committees.

Work Session

Agenda Item 1. ESSA update. Sondra Meredith, Administrator of Teacher Certification & Education, gave the board a printed toolkit, which is on the department's website, for understanding ESSA and the process of developing a state plan to implement it. The department is still drafting the plan, which stakeholders will then comment on. In June, the board will see the plan, which will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in September. Commissioner Johnson thanked staff for their work.

Vice-Chair Hull asked how recommendations in Alaska's Education Challenge would affect the ESSA state plan. Commissioner Johnson said the ESSA state plan can be changed; the U.S. Department of Education is disposed to be very flexible.

Agenda Item 1A. UAS accreditation. Sondra Meredith, Administrator of Teacher Certification & Education, provided the rationale for a request from the School of Education at the University of Alaska Southeast for an extension of its accreditation.

Agenda Item 2. Construction and major maintenance grant lists. Heidi Teshner, Director of Administrative Services, reviewed the number of projects received, carried over from the previous year, and those eligible. In response to a question, Ms. Teshner said the Kivalina project awaits funding for an access road, which is not within the department's authority. No funds have been spent on the proposed school.

Kenny Gallahorn joined the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Agenda Item 3. Legislative and budget update. Commissioner Johnson said the lack of a sustainable fiscal plan is the most pressing education issue in Alaska. Marcy Herman, Legislative Liaison, reviewed some of the pending bills related to education. Board members discussed their concerns with HB 102, which relates to limited teacher certificates. Sondra Meredith, Administrator of Teacher Certification & Education, noted that under the bill such teachers would have to be sponsored by a school district, which would give assurances of competency. Wilfried Zibell noted that the Alaska Association of Student Government supports HB 115, a state revenue restructuring act. Heidi Teshner, Director of Administrative Services, reviewed proposed budget cuts.

Agenda Item 4. Resolution about credit transfers. Dr. Hamilton said it is difficult to transfer credits into the University of Alaska from other postsecondary institutions in Alaska. The board discussed the proposed resolution, which supports the UA Regents in efforts to expand students' opportunities to transfer credits.

Wednesday, March 29

The meeting resumed at 10:20 a.m. All members were present. The board amended the day's agenda to place item 14F as 11B, and item 14H as 11C. Second Vice-Chair Harmon declared a conflict of interest on items 9A and 11B because he works with pre-elementary schools and colleges. Dr. Keith Hamilton declared a conflict of interest on item 11B because he works at a college.

Agenda Item 5A. Aurora Borealis Charter School. Scott McAdams reviewed the charter school's request for renewal of its charter. Principal Cody McCanna reviewed the philosophy of the school, noted that it has a small building, and said it has a long waiting list. Board members asked about transportation, diversity, and character education. Board members asked that the department provide more information about a charter school's performance and student body when the school seeks renewal of a charter.

Agenda Item 5B. Fireweed Academy Charter School. Scott McAdams reviewed the charter school's request for renewal of its charter. Principal Todd Hindman reviewed the philosophy of

the school and said the school's curricula has been developed by its teachers based on state standards.

Agenda Item 5C. Soldotna Montessori Charter School. Scott McAdams reviewed the charter school's request for renewal of its charter. Principal Mo Sanders reviewed the philosophy of the school and its diversity.

Agenda Item 6A. Pre-elementary regulations. Second Vice-Chair Harmon recused himself. Commissioner Johnson said pre-elementary education deserves more attention on the board and in the state. Anji Gallanos, Early Learning Coordinator, reviewed the proposed regulation, the statute it implements, and the role of the Department of Health and Social Services in regulating private pre-elementary programs.

Agenda Item 6B. Physical examination regulation. Rebecca Hattan, Assistant Attorney General, said the department's current regulation conflicts with a new state statute. The proposed regulation conforms to the statute.

Agenda Item 6C. College and career readiness assessments. Margaret MacKinnon, Director of Assessment & Accountability, reviewed the proposed regulation, which removes sections related to assessment requirements that were repealed in state statute.

Agenda Item 7A. Museum fees. Commissioner Johnson said the proposed fees help the museum address fiscal realities. Rebecca Hattan, Assistant Attorney General, reviewed an amended version of the proposed regulations, intended to provide the most transparency and maximize access by lowering the base fee for day use. Patience Frederiksen reviewed the museum's costs for facility rentals.

Business Meeting

Agenda Item 8. July meeting date. The board set 1 p.m. July 13 as the starting time and date for a special meeting by audio-conference to set the score ranges for achievement levels in the PEAKS assessments.

Agenda Item 9A. Pre-elementary regulations. Second Vice-Chair Harmon recused himself. Vice-Chair Hull moved and Kenny Gallahorn seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 60.010 Applicability, 4 AAC 60.020 Exemptions, 4 AAC 60.035 Background checks and health and safety standards, 4 AAC 60.036 Initial application, renewal of approval, and assurances regarding programmatic requirements, 4 AAC 60.037 Transition, 4 AAC 60.039 Monitoring, recordkeeping, and inspections, 4 AAC 60.040 Denial of approval; appeal, 4 AAC 60.170 Programmatic requirements for pre-elementary schools. The motion passed unanimously, except for Second Vice-Chair Harmon's recusal, in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 9B. Physical examination regulation. Kenny Gallahorn moved and Rebecca Himschoot seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early

Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 06.050 Physical examinations of school employees. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 9C. College and career readiness assessments. Second Vice-Chair Harmon moved and Dr. Keith Hamilton seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 06.710 Statewide student assessment system, 4 AAC 06.717, College and career readiness assessments, 4 AAC 06.718 College and career readiness assessment after student receives a certificate of achievement, 4 AAC 06.721 College and career readiness assessment waivers, 4 AAC 06.722 Waiver for entering the public school system late, 4 AAC 06.723 Rare or unusual circumstances, 4 AAC 06.724 Procedures for appeal from a denial of a waiver from the college and career readiness assessments, 4 AAC 06.765 Test security; consequences of breach, 4 AAC 06.765 Test security; consequences of breach, 4 AAC 06.775 Statewide assessment program for students with disabilities, and 4 AAC 06.790 Definitions. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 10A. Museum fees. Rebecca Himschoot moved and Second Vice-Chair Harmon seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move that the State Board of Education and Early Development adopt proposed amendments to 4 AAC 58.010, Fees. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 11. Approval of Bob Williams' appointment. Commissioner Johnson said Mr. Williams provides a fresh perspective, creativity, and a skill set perfectly aligned with the position. Kenny Gallahorn moved and Barbara Thompson seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the Commissioner's appointment of Robert Williams as Director of Educator & School Excellence, effective January 30, 2017. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Board members discussed the practice of approving appointments after the appointee has begun working in the position. Luann Weyhrauch said the board could hold a special meeting to consider appointments in a timely way.

Tim Parker, President of NEA-Alaska, announced that Bob Williams will be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame, the first Alaskan to be so honored. Mr. Parker presented a short video of Mr. Williams teaching in his classroom and comments from students praising Mr. Williams.

Agenda Item 11B. Resolution about credit transfers. Second Vice-Chair Harmon and Dr. Keith Hamilton recused themselves. Barbara Thompson moved and Vice Chair Hull seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the resolution in support of the University of Alaska streamlining its procedures to accept credits from other accredited Alaska postsecondary institutions. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote, except for the two recused members

Agenda Item 11C. UAS accreditation. Kenny Gallahorn moved and Vice-Chair Hull seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development extend approval of the educator preparation program at the University of Alaska Southeast School of Education through spring 2020, and support the School of Education's efforts to extend its current NCATE accreditation for one additional year. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 12. Board questions about written reports. Board members asked about student eligibility for free or reduced-cost meals, the time frame for the state plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act, mandatory trainings of educators, the State System of Support, early feedback about the PEAKS assessments, length of the assessment online window, the Alaska Developmental Profile, operating costs for the swimming pool at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, whether the board should periodically meet at Mt. Edgecumbe, the school's curriculum cycle, and state museum receipts.

Agenda Item 13. Commissioner's report. Commissioner Johnson thanked the board for its meeting, said the department is very busy, and thanked Information Officer Eric Fry, who will retire on June 30.

Strategic planning. Deputy Commissioner Sana Efird and Brian Laurent, Data Management Supervisor, updated the board on the upcoming Alaska's Education Challenge committee meetings. The board discussed whether the meetings should be during the school day. Commissioner Johnson said more people wanted to join the committees than were positions. The committees, filled after consultation with stakeholders, represent geographical diversity and expertise. Mr. Laurent reviewed the first public survey for Alaska's Education Challenge; there were so many responses, which have been categorized, that the department will not need a second survey to rank the responses.

Agenda Item 14. Consent Agenda. Second Vice-Chair Harmon moved and Barbara Thompson seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of approval of: the minutes of the January 27, 2017, meeting; the charter of the Aurora Borealis Charter School; the charter of Fireweed Academy Charter School; the charter of Soldotna Montessori Charter School; the capital project lists; and minutes of the March 1, 2017, work session. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Board comments

Charles Michael said he felt his voice was heard at the meeting.

Wilfried Zibell said it was a productive meeting, and he appreciated the opportunity to talk to a joint legislative education committee. Kenny Gallahorn agreed with Mr. Zibell.

Rebecca Himschoot said a science organization has sent a letter to the department and has not received a response. The training from the National Association of State Boards of Education was excellent. She asked that board members have business cards and name tags.

Dr. Keith Hamilton said he is encouraged by meeting with legislators, but the board and legislators should meet in January, early in the session. He thanked Mr. Zibell for his contributions to the board.

LTC Jason Toole thanked department staff. Second Vice-Chair Harmon and Barbara Thompson thanked department staff and Mr. Zibell.

Vice-Chair Hull said the department is in a difficult time of transition. She thanked staff. She said the joint committee of legislators is confident in the board's ability to lead. She welcomed Charles Michael.

Chair Fields thanked Mr. Zibell. He said Marcy Herman has stepped up to help out in a time of change. He said the board members, as co-chairs of Alaska's Education Challenge committees, have the role of coaches and should be prepared to lead.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m. by unanimous consent.